

Fallen Angels by HobbitSpaceCase

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Summary:

Steve wishes he could crawl out of his skin and leave himself behind.

Fallen Angels

Steve is drowning, and he still doesn't know if Billy Hargrove is a life jacket or a stone around his ankles.

Their getting together still feels like a dream to Steve. He expected to get punched, maybe even to get pushed off a cliff, but Billy had kissed him back instead. And then, somehow, Steve had found himself kissing Billy again and again, till they ended up tumbling into bed and it felt good enough he didn't want to stop.

He knows he's not in love, not even when he's got Billy spread out like some kind of fallen angel in his bed, golden curls fanned out across his pillow damp with sweat and toes curling at the end of long, strong legs, a hint of a tan still clinging to his skin, letting out only the barest moans and whimpers with his eyes squeezed shut while Steve's fingers disappear inside him. They always do this in Steve's bed - Steve's parents are never home and don't pay much attention even when they are, but Billy's dad is always home and cares too much even when he's not.

His dad's never home, and yet the man still manages to be disappointed in him. Doesn't even know it's not Nancy he's wasting his time fucking anymore when Steve mumbles out his lack of future plans at the dinner table on the rare day he and Steve's mom are both around and demanding a family meal. "What do you mean you didn't finish any of your college applications? It's that Nancy girl, isn't it?" Steve hates the way his dad clucks his tongue, sharp and decisive even though he doesn't know shit. "You've got your head in the clouds over that girl. A girl like that wants a man to take care of her, not some boy who's failing at school."

It's not Nancy he's fucking away his life with anymore, but Steve supposes his head is still stuck in the clouds. He's pretty sure clouds are made of water, and he sure feels like he's drowning all the time.

Drowning in bullshit.

Bullshit and Barb who he killed and monsters who nearly killed him and a bunch of little kids he was supposed to be protecting, and days

that keep passing him by while his life unmoors and drifts further out to sea.

“Move, Harrington,” Billy groans under him, and when he opens his eyes they’re as deep and blue as the ocean Billy sometimes can’t shut up about. Steve has never seen the ocean, though there’s a picture of it in the hallway by the kitchen, visible between the stiff figures of his parents standing against the railing of a cruise ship with drinks in hand and smiles on their faces. He used to like that picture. It was one of the few times he could remember his parents smiling. It took him a long time to see the plastic in those smiles; he never was very bright.

He’d meant to take Nancy to see the ocean, some day.

Steve moves, but he can’t seem to move on.

“I’ll take you there some day, if you want,” Billy says once, when they’re done fucking and Billy’s done rhapsodizing about the California coastline. Steve hums, one hand under his head against the pillow and the other arm curled over his stomach, fingers drifting idly through Billy’s cooling come. He tips his eyes sideways. Billy’s propped up on one arm, looking at him with his deep blue ocean eyes. He slides his come-stained fingers into golden curls and pulls Billy into a kiss.

“Sure,” he says, when they break apart. Billy’s smile is the only part of him that’s sweet or soft, in the rare moments when it’s real.

Summer creeps up faster than he wants it to, in between fucking Billy, disappointing his dad, and rebuilding a fleeting friendship with Nancy. Jonathan is going to NYU, as she tells him proudly. She’s thinking about applying to NYU too, along with Wellesley and Columbia and a whole slew of places out east that are close to Jonathan. Steve thinks about her face when he’d asked her to read his college application letter, and wonders why he even ever tried to measure up.

A week before school ends, his dad sits down with him in his office, and they have a Talk about his future.

He's still drowning when he leaves the office, but he's drowning with a Plan now.

The summer heat hits hard the week school ends, and Steve finds Billy after the graduation his parents couldn't make it to and asks Billy to fuck him in his empty house, closing his eyes and drowning in the only good feeling he's managed to find lately.

It's not enough to distract him forever, but it's enough to distract him for a while.

"My dad got me a job at his Indianapolis office. I move there next week." They're lying in Steve's bed, his window open to the sweltering late June afternoon. His dad is off on some business trip and his mom is probably spending too much money in New York City with all her friends whose husbands didn't make them move to a little town in Indiana to avoid big city rent and taxes. He doubts either of them will notice if the electric bill is a little high as the AC attempts to compete with the open window. He likes having the windows open. Doesn't like feeling trapped inside these days.

Billy's hand stills where it's tracing an absent pattern into Steve's arm. "That's soon," he says. Steve swallows down the ice chips clogging his throat. "I've been wanting to get out of this shithole town anyway," Billy continues. "Indianapolis still hardly counts as a city, but I guess it's better than here."

The words take a second to register. Then Steve is turning to stare at Billy in confusion. "I'm not," he starts, "We're not... you want to come with me?"

"Um," Billy says, staring back at Steve. His eyes are so blue, like the ice spreading through Steve's limbs. "Unless you're breaking up with me?"

A slightly hysterical laugh bubbles up from Steve's chest. "I can't *break up* with you," he says, harsher than he means to. "We weren't *dating!*"

Billy's hand draws back from his arm, and he tells himself he doesn't miss the warmth. "What the fuck?" Billy says, and Steve thinks he

means his words to be harsher than they sound. “What the *fuck* we’re not dating?”

Steve reaches out, and Billy is vibrating with energy. “We weren’t,” he says, and doesn’t really know what he means, but he powers through the mess anyway. “It was just messing around?”

Billy practically shoots off the bed away from Steve. “You know what,” he spits, “Fuck you.” He grabs his clothes that are scattered around the room without looking at Steve. Spits out another, “Fuck you,” when he can’t find his second sock. The sound of the front door slamming rings in Steve’s ears for minutes after he is gone.

He knew he wasn’t in love. He’s an idiot, sure, but he wasn’t in love.

At least he’s leaving this stupid town and all it’s stupid people in a week. Too bad he can’t crawl out of his skin and leave his own stupid self behind.